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ABSTRACT

This document contains 48 pieces of writing that were authored by employees of six different businesses who participated in an adult diploma program. A variety of genres are represented, including poems, personal narratives, book reviews, essays, letters, and fiction. The works are grouped under the following broad headings: goals, freedom, choices and cardinal virtues, childhood memories, immigration, and unexpected events. Among the items included are the following: a poem expressing a student's reaction to her upcoming graduation; several essays explaining what workplace education has meant to individuals; letters written from the viewpoints of individuals living during the American Revolution and during periods of overt racial discrimination; an essay on cardinal virtues and the life and death of Yitzak Rabin: a woman's thoughts on her life since her husband's death; a man's experiences as an Angolan refugee; "slice of life" stories relating individuals' childhood memories; an essay devoted to the values of the main character of a short story; and essays recounting the personal stories and challenges experienced by immigrants from Haiti, Cambodia, Hong Kong, the Azores, Portugal, Canada, Cape Verde Island, Italy, and Vietnam. (MN)

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ED 425 302

National Workplace Literacy Program

CONTINUING EDUCATION INSTITUTE
GLOBAL 2000 PROJECT

7d. Adult Diploma Program Student Books

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ADULT DIPLOMA PROGRAM

CEI

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During the 1995-96 academic year students from four different locations in the Continuing Education Institute's Adult Diploma program submitted the selections in this book entitled "Pathways." The students are from American Engineered Components, Analog Devices, Boston Scientific Corporation, Fire Control Instruments, Malden Housing Authority, and Nidec/Power General. The topics in our book are Goals, Freedom, Choices and Cardinal Virtues, Childhood Memories, Immigration, and Unexpected Events.

Every time change occurs in our lives we are confronted with many challenges. The choices we make can make a significant difference in our lives. The students of the Class of 1996 decided to commit themselves to positive change. In "Pathways" the students share some of their experiences. Congratulations to everyone for their courage, commitment, and excellence in CEI's Adult Diploma Program.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hassey

Kathy Hassey
Director, Adult Diploma Program

GOALS

Am I really graduating? From what?
From High School? At this age!

It is amazing that after all these years, I am finally
getting my High Shcool Diploma.

It doesn't matter how old you are to be in school as
long as you achieve your goal.

I hope that my achievement would inspire those who are
thinking about going back, but feeling they are to old.

DON'T GIVE UP!!

Marie Lubin"

My name is Carolyn L. Davis. I was born March 28, 1958 in Meridian, Mississippi. I am the youngest of six kids, four boys, two girls.

I moved to Boston the year of 1973. I was 14 years old. I attended high school at the Jeremiah E. Burke and dropped out in the eleventh grade. After I dropped out I started working at a well paying job, and school didn't seem important until I started a family. My only regret in my life is not completing high school, and I realized it when my kids were old enough to ask me the question "Ma, what school did you graduate from?" When I decided to get my GED my kids were still young and I didn't have time. When they were of age I got laid off, but never long enough to attend a class. After my last lay off I was hired by Boston Scientific. I started in the coex department as an assembler, but I applied for the stockroom, and got the position in the stockroom. I work with two other people. My job is to take care of outgoing Kanban cards. Kanban cards are cards that other departments send to us requesting parts. I deal with a lot of numbers and I do all the outgoing transactions.

I have a good work team and enjoy working for Boston Scientific, but I'm still missing something in my life and Boston Scientific is giving me the chance to get it. My first goal is to get my High School Diploma. It will take me six months and I will succeed if I attend class and do my homework. My second goal is to become a nurse and I will achieve that by getting good grades and applying to nursing school. My third goal is to move down south and buy a house. I will have to have a good education, good job, and be financially stable to make my goals come true.

Carolyn Davis

Taking this class for my high school diploma has taught me a lot about myself and my abilities. I dropped out of school four years ago due to family and personal problems in my life at the time. I was naive and thought I knew what was best. I wanted to grow up and be in control of my life. I didn't think that four years later I'd be back in school. I have grown up a lot since then and I've realized how important my education is. It's a lot harder the second time around but it also means more to me this time. In a few months I'll be a high school graduate. That's something I never thought I'd be able to say. Thanks to the help of family and a few special friends, Ill have a high school diploma to be proud of.

Michelle Gray

My name is Carmen Miranda:

I'm working a full time job, and I'm a student of the Adult Diploma Program right now. I've been working for Boston Scientific since nineteen ninety two and my job is assembler I build catheters, and it is a very instructive and a special job, one of my goals is to finish High School and continue my studies because I want to go to college and get better professional skills. I would like to be a graduate nurse, because I like to help people, especially infants. I have another goal which is to take a vacation for two weeks and visit my family in the summer, and I want to have the opportunity to visit my grandmothers grave in the cemetery. She die last June. After I do all these, I would like to find a good job because I plan to buy my own house in my country.

Carmen Miranda

Kushangi Munshi

My name is Kushangi Munshi. I was born and raised in India. My parents still live in India, I visit them once in a while. I have been living in Waltham, Massachusetts, U.S.A. for the past 13 years. I have a husband and two kids. I work at Boston Scientific Corporation, and they gave me this great opportunity to go back to school and get my High School Diploma. After my graduation, I can continue my education towards becoming an accountant and get a better job.

I want to achieve my goal which is to get a good job and send my kids to college and to make their futures better. I would again, like to say that I am really thankful to B.S.C. and my supervisor, Mike Nazarro, who gave me this golden opportunity to reach my goal. I am also thankful to all my great teachers Matthew Puma, Peggy Kimball, Susan Yao, Sheila Hurley, Ann LeBlank, and Kathy Hassey, who were there, helping us anytime we needed them I can't forget Dr. Lloyd David, Program Director at C.E.I., who supported and encouraged us all the way.

I am also grateful to all of my classmates who have been so encouraging. I look forward to graduating with all of them at Don Bosco High on June 30th.

Kushangi Munshi

When I entered Boston Scientific, I didn't have any idea that I would be taking my High School Diploma all over again. On October last year, an opportunity came up, and that was to become an American Citizen. Both opportunities came knocking at about the same time and it felt like the Country in which I was living in for the last 9 years of my life, had opened up its arms and offered me anything to make me a better and smarter person.

I accepted both opportunities and for the High School, I went and took the test. I didn't pass the first time. I was very upset, but I knew that wouldn't help and I would have to try again and so I did. So hard it was for me to speak the English Language. I didn't have any help at home; everybody was always so busy, and so I did feel like quitting. I spoke with the Groupleader, Supervisor, with some teachers and at last with the ADP Director, Mrs. Kathy Hassey. Everyone, the people I spoke with, refused to see my points on quitting the Program, and I thought that the only right thing to do, was to finish the program. Believe it or not, that gave me a lot of energy and inspiration into doing really well in school and receive my High School Diploma.

We are at the end of the course, now, had I tried very hard to make it every step of the way. One thing I learned for sure was the help, work, dedication and caring the all offered me in the Country, and today I am very proud to be an US Citizen with a High School Diploma!

Since I was young, my objective was always to reach for my dreams. As I grew up I left my childhood memories behind because "life" was begining. So complicated, so complex, so difficult.

The years passed by, my family and I and many others were victims of the violence of the civil war, the oppression, the discommunication of one another.

My children were born, how much would I like to be able to end my great search for the stars, to show my descendents how beautiful the shining of the stars really is, and the sweet sensation of breathing liberty really is.

When suddenly...My dream became a reality, finally the stars were there, and my search was over. Not 5, but 50 stars awaited me. The stars that represent Liberty, Justice and Peace.

After many ears of waiting, I can now say with happiness and pride that this is my country.

God bless America!

Carlos Poco

From the age of nine, I have been tinkering with discarded junk. I have spent hours taking apart, repairing, and inventing mechanical toys and appliances from empty cans, pieces of pipe, wire and bolts. Thinking back on those hours spent in my dad's repair room, I realize that the patience and determination that have played so important a role in my life originated and developed there. I realize, also, that what I like to do now is not all that different from what I did then. It makes sense that tinkering with toys should lead to tinkering with bicycles and that solving mechanical problems should lead to solving mathematical problems.

I can't remember being influenced by much by what happened during Vietnam war. But I can't not forget the day I stepped on to a small boat, with a hundred people risking our lives for freedom. I was one of a million people who escaped the country with the given name "boat people." A year later, from the time I left Vietnam, I had been transferred through several countries such as Malaysia, and the Philippines as a refugee. Finally, I came to Boston, Massachusetts in 1984, and my dream has come true. I came to this country alone and the same like everyone else I had to work to earn money for living. I started work at night at a gas station and I went to school during day to learn electronics and ESL. I realized without English I wouldn't be able to communicate or to work. I started to think of myself less as a teenager and more as an adult. Sometime I ran into difficult situations and had to make hard decisions, but I found out the more challenging the experience, the more I was going to learn. Planning, organizing, and managing skills were developed by me during that time. I realized life is not as easy as I thought it would be, but life has more freedom than what I dreamed, in this country.

After one year, I finished the electronics course and I got a job in Fire Control Instruments. It is a very small company, but it has a lot of nice people to work with. I started in shipping, then stockroom and after a few years, the company had another position opening as an inspector. With the electronics course I took before they gave me that job. I keep climbing up to the ladder. Shortly after production needed a team leader who was required to speak in Chinese and this was another good opportunity for me to grow, the company offered me that job. At this time is almost ten years since the time I came to America, I am able to speak English much better than before, and I am thinking about to continuing my education. I got myself back to school, because the company I work has a program called "Adult Diploma Program." I went to that program almost a year ago and it will be completed in June. Right now I am looking forward to continuing to improve my education, and I want to be an Electrical Engineering in the future.

Randal Tran

FREEDOM

Spiritual Song

I feel one day slavery will be abolished
Yes it will, yes it will
I feel one day slaves will have a place in this society
Yes they will, yes they will
I have a feeling one day we will be able to attend school
Yes we will, yes we will
I also feel one day we will have a salary
Yes we will, yes we will
When that day comes, we will embrace each order
Yes we will, yes we will
I believe God will free us very soon
Yes He will, yes He will
I smell the freedom of liberty
Oh, freedom come to us, surprise us.
Oh, we cannot live without you
Oh freedom you are vital in our lives.

Jean Bien-Aime

Dear Mary,

Boston is in a state of unrest. After the English repealed the hated Stamp Act, Bostonians celebrated. They forgot other laws that were not repealed, like the Declaratory Act, that says we are fully subjects to all English laws, also the Quartering Act, where we have to provide living quarters for English troops. Matters became worse when the kings new finance minister enacted a series of laws on articles we need, glass, paper, paints, lead and tea. The Townshend Acts, are to raise funds for British officials. Samuel Adams, at a town meeting passed a boycott against English luxury goods. The Massachusetts Assembly approved the document. Customs agents were alarmed for their personal safety.

Soldiers have been patrolling the streets, people are saying terrible things might happen soon. They were right, street fights between soldiers and citizens were all over town. A British sentry was standing guard in front of the Custom House. He was cold and irritated, because people kept pelting him with snowballs and ice. A British captain who didn't pay his barber's bill was being trailed by the barber's apprentice The boy kept taunting and jeering him. When the sentry saw what was going on he stepped down from his post and slapped the boy. The crowd became an angry mob. The sentry raised his musket. A giant Negro stepped forward, a few minutes later he was dead. The main guard pushed through the crowd, the captain ordered his men to load their muskets. He said, "No, we will not fire on the people", when a bookstore proprietor asked if he would. An unidentified voice shouted, "Present" then "Fire!" The people ran in all directions, leaving eleven bodies in the snow.

All of Boston is in a turmoil, of course there will be arrest and a trial. The Townshend Act was repealed in London because British firms were going bankrupt. Business and trade revived. We now are free to buy English goods again. I hope this letter will find you in good health.

Yours truly,

Priscilla Black

*Songs of Freedom

Thank God Almighty

The world is free

Thank God Almighty

The world is free

Thank God Almighty

The world is free

Yes, yes we got freedom at last!

*To the music of "He's got the Whole World in His Hands"

** The F.R.E.E.D.O.M.

Yes that means freedom, yes it does

Thank you God for what you've done

Yes, we are free because of you.

**Music: "The B.I.B.L.E."

Marie Lubin

Dear Sirs,

I have to write this letter because I am very tired of watching my seven year old daughter who is suffering because she has to go to school.

Every morning she has to wake up at six o'clock in the morning. Then she has to make it to school on time. My apartment is six miles from her school, and we don't have a car, because we are poor. I am tired of watching my seven year old daughter walk to school in the winter mornings, rainy days, and bitter cold days.

This is a very dangerous situation for my daughter. She catches very bad colds and when she gets to school, there is no heating. Also there aren't enough chairs and desks. She has to sit on the floor, plus there are 104 pupils in her class. Also she has to use the outhouse in the backyard for toilets.

I want to stop all this for the sake of my daughter. When I walk with my daughter to school I see white students who have a school bus.

My problem is when there is nice weather the buses windows are open the white students throw things at us. Even their schools are well-appointed, schools equipped with playgrounds, sportsfields, libraries, and other facilities.

Please I would like the same equal rights just like the white children. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Brown

Lata Rana

Hi Lloyd,

I hope that this letter finds you okay. As for me, hectic as usual. I would have written sooner, but my family and I are trying to get "our house back in order" after the Boston Massacre that just took place here in Boston.

I'm sure you have heard the news. It is all over the World. Boston is a mess. All those lives lost over a brawl between a few soldiers and rope makers. After the soldiers lost the fight, instead of them accepting defeat like men they began to harass people as they were on patrol. The friction built between the soldiers and the towns people. During this time a soldier made the mistake of slapping a town boy. From there the battle began, mobs broke out, and the death toll rose. God, I was afraid for my family and me to walk the street. Also a slave by the name of Crispio Attucks was killed by a soldier. No one knows why he was ever in town after dark.

Well that is enough for now. I will write again soon. Take care of yourself and I will do the same, with God grace.

Sincerely,

Lemuel Straker

Freedom Song

All I want is to be free

instead of living in this slavery

But you gave me life with sweet serenity

by lighting a ray of hope for me.

We want freedom,

It's our choice

We want freedom

to raise our voice!

Sicy Thomas

CHOICES & CARDINAL VIRTUES

CARDINAL VIRTUES

Rules and regulations are referred to as laws. Laws have been created in order to establish a non-chaotic society. Without these codes of conduct we would live in an extremely confused and dangerous state. I feel laws were established in order to maintain discipline in the world. Without this discipline people would just run around killing and doing bad stuff like it was okay.

I feel people in our society need to believe in the four cardinal virtues. The first rule is fortitude, meaning strength and courage in an individual. The second is temperance, control over one's situations. The third is prudence where people have to make decisions that are right in specific situations. Finally the fourth is justice when society and individuals should all be treated fairly.

I have chosen to write about two of the mentioned virtues, temperance and fortitude. These two virtues can help to best describe the person I have become, as well as, describe the person I have been in the past. I have learned to display temperance at a high level. In my past I did things that were wrong, as well as, against the law. At the time of my actions I was fully aware of their illegality, but I continued to do them. I was weak and lacked the courage and strength needed to fight my urges to do them. I have since learned to control myself and the things that I do.

In my previously held life I would hang out with my friends all day, sell drugs, and not be bothered to think about who I was really hurting. I only cared about all the money I was making from their bad habit. I was addicted to the money. This money allowed me to do the things I wanted. it allowed me to buy all the things that I believed were important. I was like a junky. I was into the money and it was all I wanted.

I was outside every day doing my thing: selling drugs. It got to the point that all I cared about was the money. It was my everything. A number of my friends would tell me to stop dealing drugs and get a real job. I would not listen to anyone. The money I was making already controlled my mind. A lot of people pretended to be my friends because of the money I had. You see when we went out I was the "fool" paying for everything. I realized I had been used when I no longer had any money to give or pay for our outings. These people stopped calling and coming around. I realized that all the people who had pretended to be my good friends disappeared. When I had the money everybody was around, but when the money was all gone so were they. This in the end was my own fault for not being able to see clearly.

After a while I started to get sick of dealing drugs. I realized that the life I was leading was not right. I was hurting a lot of people. I was hurting myself. I wanted to stop, but it was too late. I was in it too deep. At this point I found out that the cops were already watching me and had had me under surveillance for a few months. I was in trouble with the law so it made no difference if I stopped or continued to deal.

In my past I have not showed fortitude. I lacked the strength and the courage to stop doing wrongful things. It was not till I found myself imprisoned that I finally woke up. When I was in jail, I not only hurt myself, I hurt my family (especially my mother). If there was some way of taking it back I would, but there is not so I can only move forward.

Now I can show fortitude, I have strength and courage to help me to persevere in the face of adversity. From my past I have acquired fortitude and will continue to practice it for I have a long road still ahead of me. I want to attend college and am trying to get financial aid so that I may pursue my education. I was dealt some bad news, for I am not qualified because I do have a criminal background. I am not going to give up. I will fight it. I went to an open house held by a local community college (Bunker Hill) and spoke to a gentleman about my dilemma.

The director of the open house was a man by the name, Paul Nelson; when he finished the presentation on what was available, he asked if their were any questions. I explained my situation to him and he went to fish out the information for me. I feel he went out of his way to help me, for he had to contact the head of the financial aid department to gather the information for me. Mr. Nelson returned and informed me that the new financial aid application did not require you to answer any questions about criminal offenses. I was happy for this meant that I would be able to attend college. I thanked Mr. Nelson for his advice and help. I am glad to say that in the Fall of '96 I will be enrolled in classes. I am going to study Electronic Technology. (I am good with my hands and with hooking up wires and things). When I am finished with school I want to be able to get a decent job so I can better my life.

As for temperance, I will never again give up my control over a situation. I will never "fall off the chair" again. I will never return to my life of selling drugs or any of the negativity associated with it. It was not a positive way to live, and I will continue to work for better. I can now hold my head up so high it is in the sky, and I will never again let it fall into the garbage. I will continue to attain my education and move on with my life. I am going to put the world in my hands the right way, not the wrong way. I want to get a job as an electrician and maybe work for the electric company itself.

I have learned a lot about strength, courage, and control in my life with its complex turns, but I also believe that you can look to the lives of others to gain knowledge. A man I feel who has overcome shortcomings and succeeded in unifying a vast area of people was Yitzhak Rabin. Until recently he had been fighting for one unified Israel, overlooking some of his own life in the struggle to achieve this great goal. Rabin was a man who took control and did not let anything or anyone cloud his goal. Rabin acquired great strength with time and showed an incredible amount of courage. He refused to let the judgment others had of him slow down his purpose in life. Rabin knew what he wanted to do in his life and moved to attain those goals.

Yitzhak Rabin was a powerful man. Temperance was shown in his work. He was trying to unify all of Israel. Yitzhak took things into his own hands and did not let things bring him down. He had a magnificent appetite where his goal to unify Israel was concerned. Rabin wanted to make a difference, so he threw himself into the efforts aimed at gaining unification in Israel. Rabin started a movement to bring peace to his "heartsick" country, as well as those nations surrounding him. This all vanished suddenly and the man responsible was incredibly one of his own, a fellow Israelite.

Rabin displayed fortitude in his strength to keep going even in the face of danger. Rabin did not let threats cloud him. He knew he was in a powerful position and that this type of thing was a natural occurrence. He was not taken back by it; instead he used it to his advantage. This type of threat was what kept him going. It was these people who were keeping Israel down, and he would not have that. Rabin overcame fear and turned it into courage. This was the courage that was going to be especially important in his fight for peace. Rabin knew that the road ahead was full of potholes and detours, but it was not enough to keep him from accomplishing it.

Rabin's dream of unifying Israel was washed away by a man named Yagil Amir. This man confessed to the killing of Rabin. Amir stated that " The cold-blooded decision to end Rabin's life was made in order to stop the peace process." It is not believed that Amir acted alone. It is believed that his brother Hagai Amir had some involvement with the plot to murder Rabin. Hagai was responsible for assembling "dum-dum" bullets for his brother Yagil. All of this is still under investigation. I do not believe that the matter will be resolved for some time. Until then we can only speculate about who was involved and why.

Yitzak Rabin is blamed for hundreds of deaths of Jews. For this reason, it is alleged that Yagil Amir was aided by others. Rabin was not considered an angel and had over time accumulated a long list of enemies. Rabin in his quest for peace had relinquished land that belonged to the Israelites. This did not make the Israelites very happy. Many Israelites did not like the policy he kept when it concerned peace. This policy was not liked because it obtained peace at whatever the cost. It was said that Rabin had no love for human life.

This is a point in his life where temperance and fortitude were lacking. I believe he adopted this policy due to his own upbringing. When Rabin was a child he was not shown much love or attention from his parents. To Rabin's parents business was always more important than pleasure, even where their child was concerned. This was the agenda he was taught in his own home, and it is the model that he adopted in his own life.

With every passing day comes some new news associated with Rabin's death. Now we are hearing that there was a large conspiracy involved with the murder of Rabin. We hear reports that there were many involved with the planning and eventually with the execution itself. We hear about all the different organizations being tied to this horrible act. We also are hearing that the murder was not inspired by one man's decision to act,

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Cardinal virtues affect our everyday life in different ways. We as a society learn many of these virtues "by trial and error." We make mistakes and learn from them. We learn to adjust to these lessons in order to better ourselves. It may be a small detail we deem unimportant with everyday survival, but under heavy inspection it proves to be much more. If we live truly virtuous lives we can be called good people, but this is not the case all the time. We as a society can improve the way we function if only we truly look at ourselves.

Melissa Alvarez

A Turning Point of My Life

My life took a tragic point on Jan. 5, 1995. That was the day my husband Robert died. His first anniversary is approaching, This is very hard for me and my sons. Especially around the holidays. I feel very sad and lonely at times even though I know Robert would want me to go on.

At the time of my husband's passing I felt totally abandoned by his family and my own. I felt alone and hurt except for my children, who have helped me through this ordeal. We had to pull together as a family. It was very hard on them and myself.

Then, as time went on, I had met a gentleman by the name of Paul. We have been together now for a few months, and he has helped me through the good times and the bad times. He has helped me with my children. Our friendship has grown into love and through all of this he has encouraged me into going to school. It's the one thing that has helped my self-esteem and for him I am grateful. I honestly believe Robert brought me and Paul together.

Through my experience of the recent past I have gained fortitude and temperance and a degree of prudence.

Today my outlook is far more positive since the period of January 1995.

Since my enrollment in this class I have gained greater confidence in myself, more hope for me and my boys.

Today my children, myself and my boyfriend have a lot of love and can expect a better future.

Fortitude is all the strength I have gained today. Temperance I gained all my self control. Prudence I got my understanding of life in general.

Judy Cipoletta-Murdock

One of the biggest choices I've had to make in my life was to build a firm solid foundation for economic and social stability and family structure within the community. Some might stereotype this community as drug and gang infested, the community with a dismal future, the place I refer to is called "Roxbury"

In 1992, my wife and I were blessed with the determination and self-discipline to strive for home ownership. It was hard, but we prevailed and bought our home there.

Like other big cities, we had our share of drugs and crime; however, we just were not willing to give up our peace and happiness to the bangers on the block. Also we were unwilling to give up on our dreams which would free our souls from the poverty we shamefully saw at nearly every turn of the corner within big cities and beyond.

We formed a neighborhood watch which turned into one of the most successful in the City of Boston. With the help from home owners and tenants we formed an association which is one of the strongest. Through City Government and law enforcement we made the difference, and so can you...

Tony T. Key

A Little Slice of My Life

One of the more difficult decisions I had to make in my life was the choice to leave Angola, because of civil war problems and extreme insecurity in that one African country.

This choice was brought about, because of a lot of tragic consequences. I had lost all my properties obtained during a lot of years of hard work and sacrifices.

On December 30, 1976, I decided to go to Brazil, because at that time I could not get authorization to emigrate to the USA, where the relatives were living.

In Brazil I worked hard, but with determination. I stabilized my life. The main idea was to emigrate to the USA eventually! And finally on December 20, 1986, my wife, my three children and I arrived to New York City.

After 9 years of residence a wonderful event happened in my life. On December 14, 1995, I had the great honor to become an American Citizen! Obviously, I'm very proud!

This is a little slice of my life.

Carlos Poco

I remember there was a time in my life when everything seemed to crumble up all at one time. It all started when I was living with my mother, my two children and pregnant. I left Boston, because the father of my kids was not giving me a helping hand, he was the reason my life was going down hill. I thought everything would change for the better but, things only changed for the worst. Puerto Rico is for people who already enjoy life and need a place to relax and be peaceful. I was living in a town called Patillas. A place where there is no street light and your closest neighbor is about a mile away. The department stores are in a city called Rio Pidras, which is two hours away from Patillas. It was very tough for me to adjust to this kind of life style, especially with two kids and pregnant and without any kind of support. After all the suffering and struggling my life has changed for the better. By the time I came back to Boston I had three children and one on the way. Even though my family has grown bigger, coming back to Boston my life is more simple. I did not come back to my old life I came back to a new one. I have people who encourage me. For example, a person that became very close to me, that give me support and understanding, who believes in me, because of this person I am who I am today. Life has a lot of changes for me and because of it I learned to think positive and try very hard to achieve my goals. Now that my life has been better, I have self-respect for myself and self esteem. I would not let anyone every control my life again, the father of my children did. This was the turning point of my life.

Maria Rivas

This paper is about choices we make in life, and how we can over come our fear, and believe in ourselves and become successful. This paper will explain my life, and Maya Angelou's life.

Maya Angelou was born in the nineteen thirties in the southern part of the United States of America, in a town called Stamps Arkansas. As a young child growing up with her grandmother, she was raped by her stepfather. Maya never knew what happened to her, she never put herself in the way to be raped. All she wanted to be is a normal eight year child, who needed love and care from her mother and stepfather. Maya was so devastated by the attack that she refused to speak for five years.

Maya over come her fear and become a very successful writer. She is best known for her five Autobiographical novels. "I know why the caged bird sing" (1970), "Gather together in my name" (1974), "Singing and swinging and getting merry like Christmas" (1976), "The heart of a woman" (1981), and all God's children traveling shoes (1986). Maya herself explained, I speak to the black experience but I am always talking about the human condition, and what we can endure in our lives and still survive. Maya Angelou is still alive today, and well recognized for the speech she did for Bill Clinton's Inauguration.

I was born in the Island of Jamaica, and grew up in the city of Kingston. Most of my life all I wanted to do is play on the street, not knowing that school was going to play a very important part in my life. In the early stage of my life, I dropped out of school not knowing what I wanted to be, or what I wanted to do in my life.

When comparing myself with Maya, we both went through similar hardship in our lives. Presently I am living in the United States of America, and now moving forward with my life. I am working at Boston Scientific Corporation, as an Inventory Analyst and going to school through the Company to achieve my high school diploma. My goal for the future is to become an Engineer.

" "My thoughts for this paper."

If Maya can over come her fear in life, I can over come my fear, and be very successful in the future.

Ken Taylor

A Turning Point

The turning point of my life was when I decided to leave my home town which is called Holyoke, Mass. I had decided to venture out to see if there is a future for me, maybe find a job, and start a family, and most of all discover a meaning for my existence.

In 1974 I moved to Everett, Mass.. Here I found a job working for Parkway Transmission. I needed this job to start a new way of life. I was happy to start working again. But still there was this feeling of something missing.

After work, I went home to freshen up. Then I thought, maybe I will go roller skating. This is how I loosen up, when there is something bothering me. Suddenly I saw a fine, beautiful, good looking girl. I ask her if she would like to skate with me. She replied "yes, I would like to skate with you." We skated most of the evening together. The skating rink was ready to close for the evening. Then she ask me if I would go and have some pizza with her. I accepted with a big smile. This was to be the beginning of a new relationship for me.

This was my turning point.

Michael Tarczynski

In reading the article in the Globe and the book To Kill a Mockingbird, I learned that myself, as an adult and parent, I too have to follow the rules of the Cardinal Virtues. I need to teach my children that in order to go through life there are rules to follow and there are sacrifices to be made now and many years to come. I intend to be a better role model and set good examples for my children and show them that going to school and getting a diploma is important. It takes a lot of fortitude; the strength of mind and courage to preserver in the face of adversity and temperance; the self-discipline, the control of all unruly human passions and appetites. I believe I can make it and do what I can for my family. I am proud of myself. I will take full advantage of opportunities, like going to school, getting a diploma and then attending college.

I have learned from my struggles. Keep my head up and look toward the future. I want a better environment for my children and for me. My experiences have taught me not to give up so quickly, to keep going and show temperance. I have also learned from my experiences, how important it is to use wisdom to make the right choices.

I hoped that my paper would show how hard I have used the cardinal Virtues to get where I am today in life.

Trista Wooden

UNEXPECTED EVENTS

"Oops" There Goes the Turkey!

"Oops" There Goes the Turkey!

"Oops" There Goes the Turkey!

"Oops" There Goes the Turkey

In order to tell my story, I have to go back about ten years. Being a single mother and sharing a four room apartment with my daughter, who wasn't the neatest person, but the rooms were large, and I could always close her bedroom door if it wasn't clean.

Thanksgiving was coming and my mom, also living in Waltham, always spent the holiday with me and my family. My other sisters usually took turns, but two of them lived a distance away and sometimes, Mom didn't want to travel.

When Thanksgiving comes, I put out a really big meal. I like to cook and my Mom enjoys coming over. Well, I really outdid myself that year. I always bake my pies from "scratch", no store bought pastries for me. The bread stuffing is made like my Dad used to make it. My son, who also enjoys a good meal, likes mashed potatoes, not the "instant", but like he says, "the real ones".

I put the turkey in early and later had all the vegetables cooking, fresh string beans, squash, boiled and creamed onions, and of course, "real potatoes".

When everything was ready and it was time to take the turkey out, I ran into a problem, no place to put the pan with the turkey. The top of the stove was filled with vegetables and I had little or no counter space.

My daughter Barbara suggested putting the roasting pan on the floor and lifting it out onto the platter. The only thing wrong with that was the turkey was overcooked and started to fall apart. Next thing I knew was "oops" the turkey fell on the floor. It was a good thing the floor was clean! Anyhow, we picked it up, put it on the platter, and proceeded to have a good dinner. Like my mom always said, "You have to eat a peck of dirt before you die".

Evelyn Beauregard

The Unexpected Dinner

As I was preparing my big dinner, I received a call from my stepbrother Billy, he wanted to know, couldn't I use some help cooking dinner. Well I was so astounded by this all I said was yes. And he did, we all went at my mother's he cooked collard greens, two sweet potato pies, and as we all sat at the table, I started feeling very uncomfortable why I'm not sure, but when we all placed our hands in one another's and bowed our head to give thanks for this meal, I lost that uncomfortable feeling. See I always like my stepbrother but never thought he felt the same way. By the end of the night he watched t.v. with my husband, and father, also my son laughing. They were getting along so well. But what I really remember most, those uncomfortable feelings were gone at least for this day and my dad the look on his face would always be a memorable.

Sarah A. Coleman

"Late for Dinner"

I always use to get hit when I was a kid. One time in particular on a summer afternoon, my friends and I were hanging out. We use to play in abandoned cars that were behind a garage next to where I use to live. Each one of us in a different car pretending we were racing. None of us realized how late it had become. On my way I heard my grandmother calling me. I knew I was in trouble because she called me using my full name. Now anybody that knows Puerto Rican grandmothers should know that their two main things in life are religion and swift punishment. I use to hat wearing shorts in the summer because they exposed the flesh to be hit and Grandmother had one of those sticks that made a "Whis" noise when moving through the air. I tried to make excuses, but it didn't work. I had been late for dinner and I had worried her so much. I cried and protested and took my punishment. After I sat and watched "Welcome Back Kotter" and forgot all about what happened to me that day.

Freddie Collazo

Mrs. Jones

In the book, American Street, a story has a title "Thank you, M'am" which tells about a nice lady who guides a boy back to the right way in his life that is Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.

She was a big, large and strong woman. She was single, believed in God. Her room was shared with others and she had a job in the hotel beauty shop. She was a working hard lady.

It was about eleven o'clock at night, dark, she was going home from work and a boy named Royer snatched her pocketbook. With her big and strong body, she was capable to break his bones or take him to jail, but she didn't do that. She liked to help him more than to punish him. She felt the boy wasn't a bad person through his appearence: He was fourteen or fifteen, frail and willow wild and he dressed clean and neat in tennis shoes and blue jeans. She threatened him by shooked him until his teeth rattled and sweat popped out on his face. With that kind reaction of the boy that could tell he was nice. Finally she brought him home, gave him a meal, treated him like her son. She tried to use her kindness and broad heart to covert him back to the good way in his life.

In this world, very hard to find a nice and kind person with guts like Mrs. Jones. She brought a stranger home to teach him right and wrong that was too risky for her if her judgement about that boy was wrong.

Nho Dung

"Cousin Dick"

My cousin Richard Cutting Jr., whom we called Dick, was a beautiful blond little boy. He grew into a handsome man with a wonderful gift for life and a great sense of humor.

Dick lived in Boston from 1974 to 1994. In fact, he gave himself the title of "Mayor of the South End." He worked at many things from selling real estate to being a waiter. If you lived in "Southie" you knew Dick and he knew you. He was everyone's favorite waiter at Cafe Calypso and Hammersly's Bistro. If you spend any time there you might see him helping the homeless or roller blading down the middle of the street driving cabbies crazy.

On April 19, 1981, East Sunday, Dick decided to give the people of Somerville a treat. He donned a bunny costume and his roller blades and with a basket of plastic Easter eggs in hand skated around Somerville visiting relatives. I was at my grandparents' house when he arrived. You could hear the commotion he was causing long before seeing him. Well, it was quite a sight! We all had a good laugh.

Dick dies of aids two years ago May. He was forty-three years old. His family and many friends miss him terribly. These are some of many fond memories we have of him.

Patricia A. Kovacev

One Spring Day Alone

It was a beautiful spring day, and I was walking home from school, when it started to rain. I deiced to walk fast, but the rain was coming so strong, and the wind was blowing me out of the way. The thunder and the lightning were scaring me.

My older sister who used to walk with me every day, was home sick. I was only eight years old, and I had no winter coat or umbrella with me. We lived far from the city, and I had to walk about forty-five minutes each way to school. At that time we didn't have school buses or any other transportation.

Searching for help I started to cry, and began running at the same time. I wanted my Mom and Dad to help me, but was no one there. I was all alone!

Maria Pereira

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

I was 15 years old when I had a strong desire for folklore dance (folklore is a cultural dance from my country, Haiti). At this time, I would do anything for my parents because I wanted to approach them about my desire.

New year's day, (the biggest holiday for my country) we sat down watching TV. There was a parade followed by folklore. As everybody enjoyed and was amazed by the young dancers, I grabbed the opportunity to tell them about my feeling to become one of those dancers. With a big smile, my mother was enthusiastic and agreed that I could be a good one, but the worst came. I felt that my dream was not going to be a reality when I looked at my father's face.

My father mentioned to me rudely, "you cannot serve two Gods at once--you choose the church or the dance". I was very active in the church.

My feeling concerning folklore was so strong, I would make a choice if I could do so, but I did not have one. I was very disappointed that I said I will take my daughter to dance school when she is old enough. I kept my word. She is four years old. She began dancing when she was three. She is wonderful at it and is fulfilling my fondest dream. Her name is Lorna Eunice Orace.

Marie Edwige Orace

Someone I Know Well.

This person holds a special part in my life. She is my mother. She is forty one year old, a single parent never married never will be because of her relationship with my dad. She been through a lot from her childhood so now she trying to get along with her life. There are so many good thing about my mother that I really dont know how to explain. She is sweetest person in the world, she works hard to achieve goals. She's very independent, my mother is a strong person who keeps all her feeling inside. When something bothers her she would just brake down and cry. I never like to see her unhappy.

My mom is very educated. She have her degree in nursing. She works two job. She is a good mother to me especially when am sick and cann't help myself. She is just a wonderful person to have and be around.

Camille Parker

When I was 6 years old, I liked to school very much. The school was very close to my house. I always asked my mother "cook a good Chinese breakfast for me before I go to school." Every morning, my sisters and brothers and I, walked along to school. We had a lots of fun, but sometimes, it ended up in a fight, too.

In the school, I always liked to attend school activities. I joined the school for dance groups to perform entertainment. During holiday season, the school always celebrated with contests and dance shows. After the party, I helped the clean-up group to clean the areas.

At night, I did my home work at home. After home work, I liked to see movies with my friends in the nearby theater, or go to disco dance club. Sometimes, I went to the restaurant for dinner and enjoyed fresh fruit juices for dessert. Then I would ride my bicycle to the suburb to go fishing, and stay there for while to refresh my mind.

When I was 13 years old, I liked sports a lot. I liked to play Basket ball, ping pong, soccer, football, and go in the school play ground. And other sports, I also liked to dance, swim, and ride my bicycle to the suburbs. But most of the time, after school I helped my parents to do their business.

Now I am a family man, I think about my children's future a lot. I like to take them to visit the children's museum, museum of science and to the library to rent some books. Travel and vacation are my best interests for my family.

Richard Pok

Profile

I would like to describe about my father's profile. His name is Chheng Touch. He had 2 brothers and 2 sisters. He grew up and lived in the middle class family that located in one village along the Mekon lake (Cambodia). Only him among his brothers and sisters that smart, very active and brave. He was a big guy about 5'7" height and 175 lbs. He had big shoulders, large chest, long arms and strong. His hair was black and short, his eyes were dark brown and his skin was dark. He was very nice person, serious and hard working person. The people who knew him liked him so much because he would like to make people feel better and to help people get out of trouble. He liked to wear casual clothes but at work he wore uniform.

After he graduated high school in my country he served in the Army. At that time my country was a French colony - so France's government sent the Cambodian troups to help to fight with Germany's troops in World
War II. My father lived in France for 15 years in the war zone. When the war was over, he came back home. A few years later, my country had another war with North Viet-Nam's communists. He didn't have enough time to take care of his family. So my mother had more responsibility to take care of the children. When the war with Viet-Nam was over, it began another war with Cambodian's Communist that it was help from Chineese government. That war took only 5 years but everything was destroyed by the Communists. They took over my country on 4/17/75. On that day it was a very terrible day that I cannot describe all about the terrible things that they did to me and my parent. I have never forgotten.

All of these that I described above made me believe my father was a hero because he worked very hard, he served people and country to find the peace not only my country, he tried to find the peace for people in the world. That is why he deserved to be a hero but he had a hard life because everything the government needed he had to go. He didn't have enough time to enjoy with family. He spend most of his life in the war but he was happy which he did so many good things for the people.

Sorn Touch

1. When I Was a Child

I was born in a traditional Chinese family in China. When I was three years old, my whole family move to Hong Kong.

My parents have eight children. They always want their children to have more education. They said that knowledge is a treasure. From my family education, I have always think that I should study hard and obey my parents. Once in a while, I am out of control.

When I was in High School, one day, I heard my friends mentioned the movie "Gone With the Wind" starring my favorite actress and actor Vivian Lee and Lawrence Oliver, respectively. The last two lessons of that day were physical education, and I told my teacher that I had a stomach pain. I skipped the class and went to the cinema. Unluckily, the next day my parents found out. They told me the following weekend I should stay home and write "I can't go to movies during school hours" one thousand times. That is the way they used to punish us.

2. My Father

He is a seventy year old stout Chinese man with dark brown eyes, big eyebrows and low voice.

He was a merchant thirteen years ago before he moved to Canada from Hong Kong. His face always looks serious, when he talks he makes you feel that you should listen to him. No secret can be kept before his eyes, no problems he can not solve.

Now, he is living in Canada with his seventy years old wife and two youngest son. He is my father Mr. Ko.

Paddi Wong

IMMIGRATION

Hi! My name is Natividade Andrade, but everyone calls me Natty. I'm 29 years old. I was born in Portugal Saint Michaels, Azores. I attended kindergarten in Portugal and also 1st and 2nd grade.

When I was 9 years old my aunt that has been in America for 30 years decided to sponsor all of her brothers and sisters to come to America so we all came to America. We first lived in my Aunts' house for 4 weeks until we got an apartment. I went to school and started 4th grade. My brother and sister did also. It was hard for us to make friends because we didn't speak any English plus me being shy didn't help much, but the kids tried to help us make friends. Then I graduated from junior high and on to high school. another country.

The first year of high school was very hard. I had to learn a new school. When I was 16 years old, I was on my second year of high school when I decided to quit.

I got a part time job working cleaning office buildings and a full time job at an electronics company called Micro Dynamics. I took these two jobs for 3 years until I got married.

I got married when I was 19 years old. I stayed with a full time job. I met my husband when I was 14 years old as a pen pal. We wrote to each other and called each other on the phone. I visited Portugal once a year. My husband is from the same town as I am. We got to know each other for 5 years, and then we talked about marriage. I sponsored him here and we got married here in America. It was difficult at first because we didn't know each other personally on every day bases but we worked everything out. We decided to just take one step at a time. We must be doing something right, because we have been married for about 10 years now.

We don't have any children of our own. It just didn't happen, but a beautiful thing about it is that we have adopted a little girl right from birth. She's going to be 3 years old in February. We have her for about 3 years now. She is precious and beautiful. She has big black eyes, brown curly hair, and she is smart. She keeps smiling. We named her Veronica. We teach her Portuguese and English. She understands 2 languages. Well I just hope I can give her a good future.

My future goal is to get a good future to give my family what they deserve. For myself my goals are to be comfortable in life financially and with a secure job, because I worked at Raytheon for 5 years. I got layed off for 1 and 1/2 years. I got lucky enough to find Boston Scientific. I couldn't believe I had finally found a secure job. BSC has no history of any kind of layoffs. I think my future goal is to be at Boston Scientific for as long as they want me. It's a good company to work for. I work for the ultra sound department in the clean room. I love to work there but these days no job is secure. Well I will just give my best to continue the work that I have been doing to graduate from high school because this diploma is a short term and a future goal for my life.

Natividade Andrade

My Immigration Story

I moved to USA in 1982. At this time I was 23 years old. That was a very big change in my life. The toughest for me was to adjust to the way people live here. I had trouble communicating with Americans because I didn't understand English. In Azores Island I lived on the farm of my father. Here I had to start living in the city. This was a real shock for me.

With my first job I could not understand my supervisor, who was Greek. He spoke only English. I was so nervous when he tried to explain something to me. As the time went by friends of mine started teaching me some English. I'm a quick learner. When I started to understand English I enjoyed watching TV, in this way I learned more and more. My favorite show was "Mr. Roger's Neighborhood" and "Sesame Street." I started learning more about the country and American culture.

I still try to teach my kids about my Fatherland and its culture. I want my children to know everything about the country I came from in hope that they will call Azores their Fatherland. My son went to bilingual school, and he was very successful. At home we speak English and Portuguese. Every year we attend Portuguese Fiestas, and many other cultural events, with our friends and families. Thanks to the support of my friends and help from my company that lets me attend school in my profession, my life is much better than at the time of my arrival to the USA.

Tony Cabral

I was born in Canada. I am the third youngest of a family of twelve. I have seven brothers and four sisters. I grew up in a big family. It was fun. Sometimes it was hard to get along together but there was a lot of love for each other.

We lived on the farm helping my Mom and Dad. We were always kept busy. Every morning we got up at six o'clock to milk the cows. In the summer time we had to work in the garden and in the fields to prepare the soil to plant the seed. In the spring time we helped my dad to make maple syrup.

Back then we did not have electricity or luxuries like we have today to make the chores easier. We were always busy helping each other.

In 1961 one of my brothers moved to the United States. He liked it and two years after that I decided to move in with them. Three years later I got married. I now have three children and two grand children.

My life now is very different from the way I grew up. Living in the city was a big change in my life. Everything is so easy compared to back home. The stores are so close and the transportation makes it much easier to get around.

My first job in the United States was sewing in a factory. While my children grew up I did house cleaning. I was divorced when my children were very young. I had to struggle to make a good home for my children but I made it with God's help.

I now work at Fire Control Instruments. I have been working there for twelve years. I started there as a mechanical assembler. I worked my way up to a group leader. I enjoy my position although it is stressful at times. I am very proud because I've worked very hard for it.

One of my interests is cooking. I like trying new recipes. One of my goals is to open my own restaurant one day. I have always enjoyed cooking.

Another one of my interests is gardening. I like to grow tomatoes and plant flowers I like to see the results. I enjoy gardening because I am outside in the fresh air and can hear the sound of birds it is very peaceful.

I like reading when I have the chance. I always read before I go to bed. It's relaxing and I find I sleep better. I find it very challenging for me to go back to school. I am learning a lot especially to read and write in English. Since I started school I have more confidence in myself. I look forward to accomplishing my goal and receiving my diploma in the spring.

Florence Chiasson

My Coming To America Story

Coming to America was an adventure for me. I was nine years old when my mother died of cancer, and I was left with my father. Life became very difficult for both of us. My mother had stated in her will, with my father's permission, that I should come to America and be raised by her cousin and best friend, Mrs. Rodgers. I also had to attend school.

Mrs. Rodgers agreed to adopt me, but she was divorced and immigration didn't approve in those days of single parent. However, Mrs. Rodger's daughter, Lily, was eleven years older than I and married, she adopted me. It took four years for all the papers to pass in immigration.

I came from Cape Verde Island in 1965.

My father and I left our Island, Brava, on a small boat and I got sea sick, but I felt safe because my dad was there. On the next day we arrived on the main island, Praia. Within two weeks I was ready to take off to Lisbon, Portugal.

All of this time I was happy about coming to America. I started to miss my home, friends and relatives, but dad kept saying how lucky I was to go to America where it is nice and to have lots of beautiful clothes and shoes.

Dad and I reached the larger ship, and he said good-bye to me. He had tears in his eyes and he couldn't finish his words. I started to cry also. He left me there in my own cabin on the top floor. I ran and screamed after him but he didn't turn back.

Blinded by my own tears, I slipped on the stairs inside the ship and landed on the last stair near the water fountain. I wasn't hurt, I just sat there and cried.

Suddenly, a nice couple that was on a sightseeing cruise on the same ship talked to me. Their names were Mr. and Mrs. Santiago. They helped me to feel better. Later they told me that they met my father and asked them to take good care of me. Mr. and Mrs. Santiago also missed their only son, who was left behind in their country. Mr. and Mrs. Santiago were going on vacation to Lisbon.

After 27 days on this ship, we arrived in the city of Porto, Portugal, but far away from Lisbon. We had to take a train to Lisbon.

My father had sent a telegram to a lady that had a boarding house in Lisbon for her to take good care of me.

Mr. Santiago phoned this lady and she met with me at the train station. After two weeks I was on my way to America.

Every cloud I saw I thought was America. My first port in America was New York. I changed planes to San Francisco, California where I met my adopted parents for the first time.

My adopted parents were very friendly toward me at first. My adopted father was born in California and a descendent of a Cape Verdian family, but he didn't speak the Cape Verdian language. It made communication difficult between us.

My adopted mother was a strong character. I had a very hard time adjusting to their ways.

May DePina

My Immigration Life

It was December of 1977 when my family and I came to the United States of America. We were full of energy and hope for what we expected our lives to be in the new country. My spouse and I thought that our goal was to give to our children Gianfranco 8, and Maurizio 7 years of age a better future and education. As I mentioned above, it was December and it was a very cold day. I was sad about leaving my country, (ITALY) and my extended family behind. When we arrived in Boston my husband's brother and his wife were awaiting for us at the airport. Then they drove us home, where we stayed for three weeks before we rented an apartment for ourselves.

When we came to their country eighteen years ago, the unemployment rate was very high and it wasn't very easy to find a job. My husband couldn't find anything for two weeks. Finally he went to work for a small company on a part time basis, which was good but not enough. Gianfranco and Maurizio began school. The big problem was that we didn't make enough money to pay the bills. I was so depressed that I was ready to go back to my country.

Soon after it was our first Christmas far away from our families. On top of that, both the children got the chicken pox; I didn't know what to do anymore, I just wished I had never come to their country. But two months later my husband's employer offered him a full time job. I was very happy that he finally had the chance to make a little more money which would help us to get our life together.

The worst came when I started to look for a job. The language was my nightmare. I thought my life was destroyed. Finally after four months of looking, I found a part time job working at night with other Italian people which helped put extra money in our pockets, but didn't help me learn English any better. I worked there for seven months.

In November of 1978 I applied for a job at Analog Devices and I got it. At the time the company was offering English as a second Language classes to the employees. I took this opportunity and I started to learn English. Luckily, there was an American woman seated next to me all day at work, and she also taught me a lot of common words to use every day. I realized that little by little I learned how to express myself.

At this point my life was much better. I started to save some money and three and half years later my husband and I bought our first house. The children grew fast and comfortable in every way. They made lots of friends and they built their own life in the United States.

At first life was hard, full of sacrifices and humiliations. Now we are very settled into a brand new home. One of my son's is a dentist and happily married. My other son is an accountant and still single. Both of them are doing well.

I still celebrate holidays with family in our language with our customs, home made wine, and food, the same way we used to celebrate in our country. I also celebrate the tradition of Saint Anthony's fiesta in Boston. This is the big event that Italian people still celebrate every year, the same way we do in Italy, such as broil sausages, roasted peppers, steak on the sticks and much more. We also make large varieties of Italian pastries. On this day we feel we have a little touch of Italy with us.

Thanks to the United States of America our life is back together again.

Now that I am comfortable in every way, I'm back in school to improve my English and make myself better.

This is a small part of Nancy Fraone's real life story.

Nancy Fraone

My Immigration Story

I am an immigrant from the island of Madeira, Portugal. I came to America to be with my husband, who was living in America.

On January 1969 I flew from Madeira to Lisbon, Portugal, and from there to Logan Airport in Boston, Massachusetts. When I arrived in Boston my husband, his mother and sister were there waiting for me. I was so scared to be in a strange country. My husband knew I was scared, and he told me not to be nervous, that we would be home soon.

The first impression I had of Boston was bad. I didn't like anything at all. The following day I was ready to go back home. My parents, my brothers and sisters were so far away from me; only God knew how much I cried. My husband's sister did everything she could to help me stay. She explained to me that when she came to America she didn't have anyone here to help her. She introduced me to her friends and took me everywhere with her so that I would feel more comfortable. It was during that time we became best friends.

Three weeks later a friend of my husband's who worked at Analog Devices told him that they needed assembly operators. At that time operators didn't need to be able to speak English. I went there on a Thursday to be interviewed and I was told to start working the following Monday. I learned my job fast. At that time Analog Devices didn't have English classes, but I wanted to learn English and be able to communicate with everybody. English was very hard for me. Two ladies who worked next to me started to teach me words in English. I tried hard, and with their help I learned. Three years later I was promoted to Assembly Group Leader, because I could communicate in English and Portuguese.

Connie Gonsalves

My Immigration To The United States

I come from a family of two brothers and one sister. In 1961, my father passed away. I was left with my mother, my brothers and sister. At that time I was ten years old. One of my brothers and sister was already married and had children, but we all lived together in the same house and worked in the same fields.

In 1965, my mother and I decided to immigrate to the United States to look for a better life. My mother wanted to give us a chance to make our lives better and also for the children of my brothers and sister. Back home we were not poor or rich. By their standards we were a middle income family working on our farm land. We raised cattle for beef and dairy, and grew a variety of vegetables for the family, and we sold some to the market.

We came from the island of Flores, Azores, Portugal. We first left the island of Flores, on April 5, 1965, and boarded a ship that took us to the island of Sao Miguel, in the Azores. It took four days and three nights to reach the island of Sao Miguel. The ship stopped at five other islands that was pat of the ship's schedule. At that time there was no air flight between Flores and Sao Miguel.

Once we got to Sao Miguel we stayed at a boarding house in the city of Ponta Delgada. That's where the U.S. Counsel was and where we had to get the papers to come to America. We stayed there for a period of ten weeks. That's how long it would take to have the papers ready to come to America. My mother had a U.S. passport, but I had to come with a Visa because I was a minor and needed a sponsor to support me when I first got to the U.S. A friend of my mother was living in Stoughton, Massachusetts and sponsored both of us.

On June 24, 1965, we left the island of Sao Miguel and boarded a small plane to the island of Santa Maria where we stayed over night in a motel.

The next day we boarded a TWA flight to Boston. It took about five and a half hours to reach Boston. When we got to Boston, the family that sponsored us was waiting for us at the airport. From there, they took us to their house. The house had a small apartment on the third floor and we rented it for one year.

For two weeks that family supported us until my mother got a job working in a shoe factory making $50.00 a week. That money was enough to support us. Life was a little easier at that time. I was only 14 years old so I could not work full time, also because I did not speak English. I could not get a part time job. So I spend the whole summer wandering Stoughton.

In September of that year I went to school and stayed in school until I was sixteen. At sixteen I quit school. I could not understand the English language, and I felt that people took advantage of me because I could not speak enough to them even, if I wanted to. I experienced some prejudice too. People looked at me as I didn't belong there. After I quit school I went on to work in a shoe factory where I stayed for four years.

In 1966, my sister and one of my brothers came to the U.S. with their families and joined us. My mother bought a house, and we all lived together again until I got married.

In 1970, I got married to a Portuguese woman. She is also a Portuguese immigrant. She came from the island of Madeira, Portugal in 1966, and we met in this country. I've been married for 25 and half years to the same woman and we have a son that is almost 21 years of age.

My life in the United Sates has been wonderful. I love this country. I've been a U.S. citizen since 1966. I am glad my mother made that decision to immigrate at that time and created a better living for all of us. This country has so many opportunities for you to grow that there is no limit, I'm so glad that I was given the opportunity to come here to do whatever I wanted to do under the law of the land.

Even though I was young when I left my home land, one thing that I don't forget about is my heritage. The ideas that I grew up with until I was 14 years old, my religious beliefs, the way families get together for holidays and feasts. That's one thing no matter how long I live, I will never forget where I come from. I am very proud of my Portuguese heritage, I will continue to tell my son to be proud of his father and mother's background and some day he will pass it on to his own family.

Helder D. Martins

My New Life

I immigrated to the United States in 1969. I had to adapt to change, learn a new language, new customs and to be re-united with my family and learn about my own heritage.

My family immigrated from the Azores many years before I arrived here.

After many years of separation, finally I was going to join my family in the United States. I left Brazil on November 22, 1969 and the next day I was in New York City to start my new life.

The sights were different, the houses looked funny to me, the Statue of Liberty looked even bigger than I had imagined, everything was strange, including becoming re-aquainted with my own family.

A few days later was Thanksgiving Day. How thankful I was to be with my family again.

I struggled to learn the language and to communicate with others, even more, the customs were very different from what I was use to. My family brought their customs from the Azores, so I had to learn two different sets of customs.

Every year we commemorate the Feast of Santo Christo and many others, along with all the American holidays. The Portuguese community is very close-knit we have a strong cultural bond with each other.

After many years in this country I'm very proud to say that I became an American citizen.

I love and respect every country that I have lived in. It has taken me a long time to learn and appreciate the customs of this country. I finally feel at home "GOD BLESS AMERICA."

Maria Luisa Monaco

My Immigration Story

I immigrated to the United States on Wednesday, August 22, 1979, with my parents and two brothers. None of us could speak English, except my younger brother who could speak only a few words.

When we arrived at the airport in Boston a man took a look at our passports and then another man took us to a room to take pictures and finger prints. Once we were done, he pointed our way out, we came down a hall towards the escalator. When I saw the escalator in front of me I panicked, not realizing that next to the escalators was a stairway. My brothers and I were able to get on ok, but my mother was not so lucky. Once she got on, she lost her balance and fell. I started yelling for help. My mother banged her head and fainted. A couple of people showed up and took her to a room. They gave her some water and put ice on her head. They wanted to take her to a hospital, but she didn't want to go. By that time we saw my sister and her family who were waiting for us. Later I went through the city of Boston on a hot sunny day. Everything looked so beautiful, but so confused at the same time.

The next morning I went to Analog Devices where my sister worked to be tested for a job. The following Monday I started working. It was very hard for me because I never worked before. I was not used to getting up so early. At the beginning I didn't like it, but little by little I got used to it. Until today I'm still at the same company but in a different position.

I came to America looking for a better life. My sister was here already with her husband and her family. She told me how beautiful this country was and how many opportunities it has. This was a big change for me, but I believe I made a good choice. It gave me the opportunity to grow personally, materially and financially. It also gave me an opportunity to go back to school to get a High School diploma. This is a big achievement for me. I never thought I could make it, but this dream is coming true. I can't wait for that day. It is going to be one of the happiest days of my life.

Fernanda Monteiro

The Story of My Escape from Cambodia to the United States

In 1979 my husband and I escaped from my country, Cambodia to live at the order of Thailand in preparation for coming to the USA. There we hoped to have a better life.

My country was controlled by the communist regime for about three years. During that time, my parents and brother died because they didn't have enough food to eat. My husband and I decided to leave for a better life.

The way that we escaped was we had to act casually as if nothing was going on, so we went fishing to the big river near the jungle that was on the border between Cambodia and Thailand. We had to walk across the big jungle to find the refugee camp. Finally, three days and four nights later, we arrived exhausted at the Thai's refugee camp. We were welcomed warmly, given food and a place to live. After what we had been through, it seemed like heaven.

I lived in the refugee camp for about five years. My life at that time was supported by the United Nations High Commission Relief. Sometimes my sister who lived in the USA sent money to me. For example, we had food, clothing, medicine and a house to live in. Eventhough, they provided those things for me, it still wasn't enough for me, so I had buy things that I needed. In the camp there was a market to buy things like food, clothing, and supplies for use in the house. The market only allowed the refugee people to buy things that they needed.

At that time, we were fortunate because the Thai's king allowed the refugee people who had the relatives who lived in the USA to send the money to them in the refugee camp. That the reason we had the money to but everything. The camp was surrounded by the Thai soldiers. We couldn't leave the camp area. The didn't allow refuges to go outside the camp. If we didn't follow the rule, we would receive punishment from the Thai soldiers. We would be put in jail or they would send us back to our country. When I was in the refugee camp, it was temperary as I was waiting to be released to come to the United States.

In 1983, my name was announced to come to the Philippines to studey English as a second language and American culture to prepare me to live in the United States. I lived in the Philippines for about two years. I was happy to live there for as the people were friendly to all the refugees who lived there and didn't descriminate against us because we came Every day I had go to attend class to study English and American culture. After class, I went to the market to see how they sold the food, clothes and things for using in the house. It was better than the market in Thailand refugee camp because they had good things for us. I liked the food and the weather in the Philippine Islands. They were almost the same things as in my country. After two years, I finished studying English and all about American culture.

My name was announced to come to the USA. In the first year when I began living the USA my goal was go to school to study and improve my English. In 1983 I want to attend school at Bunker Hill Community College to study ESL classes. I took English writing, skill, math and speaking classes. I was happy to learn about them. During that time, my goal was to study about accounting for a good future.

Unfortunately I was pregnant with my daughter so I can't attend school anymore. I had to stay home for a few years to wait for my daughter to grow up. Then I could leave her with the babysitter. I was looking for a job because I needed money to support my family.

Finally I got a job at Bull Electronic Company. I liked to work for the company very much. The work wasn't boring and I looked forward to working for the company. The company didn't have a school for employees while I was at that company. I still was thinking about returning to school to improve my education. I worked for Bull Electric for about three years, then I got laid off.

In 1995, I got a new job at Boston Scientific. The first day when I strted to work at this company I felt bored because I didn't know anyone in my department and the job was very easy for me. A few weeks later I started to make friends with someone who worked with me, so I had someone to talk to and didn't feel lonely again. I was comfortable with new people. I learned more skills in my department.

I was fortunate because of my company, they have a good school program for employees to attend. They call it (CEI) that means Continuing Education Institute. They have three subjects. 1. reading and writing, 2. math, science, 3. Life employment. Since I had to join all classes, I got to improve my English a lot. I know how to write the story, business letter, science project, etc... I like my teachers very much because they are helpful to all the students. They spend a lot of time with the individual students. They have a good way of teaching. Sometimes when I don't understand they try to explain to me until I understand them. I was very glad to have all my teachers in this program.

When I graduate at CEI school, I would like to go to college to study more English to earn my college degree. My new career will be in accounting and then I will have a better future.

If I can be successful at my job that means I can make more money for my family. Hopefully, I can save enough money for my children, so they can go to college and they too will be educated. In the future, I won't worry about my family. We have already set up our goals. After that my husband and I will go back to my country to visit my relatives over there.

Van Mou

The Beginning of My New Life

After 1975 the communists took over South Vietnam. I wanted to start something new. Therefore, I decided to leave my country to look for a new life. I started my trip on a dangerous ship. It was absolutely not safe to travel in.

I was hiding one day in another small boat with the palm leaves on the top. It was not comfortable in either boat. I sat in the boat but it was a very very bad situation! The water ran out. There was no rice, or other food! Three days later, Thailand pirates caught us. They gave us some water and rice but they raped five young girls; then they took all our jewelry and money. Finally they let us go. I was in this hellish situation six days and seven nights before I reached Malaysia.

Now I have a New Life in U.S.A. I have a peace of mind even though I have many problems with a new culture. I am working on my English and even though I have a degree from Vietnam, I am working to achieve my High School Diploma. America has afforded me many wonderful opportunities.

Dung My Truong

1977
Coming to America

I was never planning to come to America by myself. I came with my husband when we got married.

It was very difficult to adapt to the culture here in America. There in Portugal women are treated differently than men. Here in America women are treated the same as men. We have the same opportunities as men. Another thing that I found different was the culture here. Sometimes you saw things here in America that you never even hear about in Portugal.

I am glad I came here though because I really like it. A lot of things that I do here, I would never do in Portugal. It has been wonderful time here in America and I look forward to many more wonderful times.

Ilda Oliveira

My Immigration Story

I was born on the island of Madeira Portugal. The most important reason that I immigrated was to be with my family. I came from a large family of eight sisters and five brothers. My oldest sister came to the United States with her husband. Five years later she became an American citizen. This allowed her to sponsor parents, brohers, and sisters, and all my family had the opportunity to be together again.

In October of 1974, my husband and I arrived at the Logan Airport, in Boston Massachusetts. At first, I was scared and very cold. The temperature was 40 degrees and back on my tropical island, it was 75 degrees. The only thing I had in mind, was to begin a new life with my husband, and live close to my parents, brothers, and sisters.

Being in a new country wasn't easy! The only languages I knew how to speak were Portuguese, and a little French. Learning English was the most important issue on my mind.

One of the things I disliked most about being in America was, that I had to get up everyday between five and six o'clock in the morning to go to work! My first job was in a shoe factory. I sewed army boots, and regular men's boots and shoes. It was a hard job, but one of the few I could get without any English communication skills. Life was not easy and we had to get used to the culture.

Today, I work at Analog Devices, Inc. My job title is Out Going Quality Control operator. I am the last person in the factory to see a product before it goes to the customers. My job carries a lot of responsibility but I like it and think I am good at what I do.

Although I know I feel like I belong in America there are traditions and cultures that we never forget and we still celebrate with family and friends. For example, August 15, it is a Holy day on my island. The religious festival is called "Our Lady of the Monte." It begins on August 5, and ends on the 15. Every year my family and I get together and we celebrate this day. A large part of our tradition involves food. Each one of us makes a different dish, but the principal meal for this day is barbecued beef on a stick with fresh brick oven baked bread and home made wine. When we celebrate this festival, we remember that piece of land in Madeira where we were born.

Today, I have my own family, two daughters, and one son. We go to my original home on vacation to visit, and also to show our children the tropical island of their heritage in the Atlantic ocean.

After all these years, I am in school to improve my reading, writing, and speaking skills in order to better myself everyday. For this opportunity I am thankful to the Continuing Education Institute (CEI) program.

Being an immigrant isn't so bad after all.

Olivia Ramos

My Desire

When I was a child, I had a desire to see the world. My father was a businessman. He worked in one place. Some of my friends' fathers were employed in the government jobs. In some government jobs, employees get ordered to transfer to another location every three or four years. Employees then have to move to where they are transferred. When I saw my friends moving to another state or town, I wished my father had a government job instead of his own business, so I would get a chance to move to other states.

When I got married, my husband had a government job, but his job did not require him to transfer to another place.

One of my brothers-in-law was living in the United States. He asked my husband if we would like to migrate to the United States? When we said yes, he applied for the petition for us to move here. After waiting for seven years, we finally got our visa to move to the United States

When we got our visa, I was so happy that I finally got my wish to move to another country and see the world. As it is said "Where there is a will, there is a way."

Savitri Singh

My Immigration Story

My name is Fatima. I was born on the island of Madeira, which is off the coast of Portugal. After hearing so many fascinating stories about America "the land of opportunity", I was curious to see what it was all about...and I got my chance. In 1974, my husband and I immigrated to the United States.

We flew from Madeira to Lisbon, Portugal, from there to Logan Airport in Boston, Massachusetts. When we arrived at Boston my sister Connie was there waiting for us.

My impression of Boston was awesome. The size of the buildings was astounding, and the traffic caused such commotion. Coming to America was a big change for me. Everything was new and different compared to my island. It was exciting to be in a "new" world, but not knowing the language, or the culture made it very scary. The "land of opportunity" was not going to be too easy to adjust to.

I came to America to be together with my sister and her family and to try a better way of life. Because of the language difference I had to depend on my sister for almost everything, from transportation to shopping.

I came to America to be together with my sister and her family and to try a better way of life. Because of the language difference I had to depend on my sister for almost everything, from transportation to shopping.

I lived with my sister for three months. During this time I was looking for employment. After interviews at several companies, I found that because of my limited understanding of English, finding a job was going to be difficult.

I hard from a friend that a nearby company was hiring non-English speaking people. I had finally found a job! It was in a shoe factory, sewing leather boot. The working conditions were deplorable! The factory was old; hot in the summer, and cold in the winter. We were paid very little and had no benefits. I was unhappy with my job and I wanted to go back to my country. Then Analog Devices Company started hiring people. My sister Connie was already working there and she got me a job there, and I am still and Analog employee today.

I started learning English slowly, and shortly after, I gave birth to my first American born daughter. Adapting to a whole new way of life, culture and country is not an easy thing to do. I found myself running into such a culture shock, but looking back now I consider myself, my husband and all other immigrants very brave individuals.

We still celebrate some of our cultural traditions in America. One of these traditions is Saint Martins Day. On November eleventh many Portuguese families gather together for the season's tasting of wine. We hop from one friend's house to another tasting the new homemade wine, eating roasted chestnuts and grilled codfish. The whole family gets together and we have lots of fun.

Overall, I am very glad that my husband and I decided to come to America. Although it was very difficult and frustrating at first, we slowly managed to establish ourselves and our culture in this massive country. Now that my parents and most of my brothers and sisters are in the area, it feels as if this is my country now. Sometimes people must take risks in their lives, and moving to the United States was difficult, but a rewarding risk.

Fatima Viveiros

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